

Job Description	
Job Title:	School Counsellor
Working hours:	37.5 hours – Term Time Only Ability to work the hours needed to meet all the demands of the job. This will include hours outside of school hours which is an expectation of the role.
Location:	You may be required to work at any site of the Ambition Community Trust
Staff responsible to:	ACT Therapeutic Team and Heads of Centre
Accountable to:	ACT Therapeutic Team and Heads of Centre
Permanent/Fixed term:	Permanent

School Counsellor

Main purpose of the post

The School Counsellor will support the emotional, psychological, and social well-being of pupils aged (typically in Key Stage 2 and 3) by providing a safe and confidential environment for them to discuss and work through challenges. The counsellor will work closely with teaching staff, parents, and external agencies to ensure the overall development of the child and create a supportive, relational inclusive school culture.

KEY TASKS – General

1. To fully support the Head of Centre, Executive Head and the Governing Board of Ambition Community Trust (ACT) in the discharge of their duties, by ensuring maximum efficiency in all aspects of delegated authority.
2. To play a leading role in the development, dissemination and promotion of an effective and challenging vision and ethos.
3. To play a leading role in developing the aims of ACT.
4. To support all staff in achieving the priorities and targets that the service sets itself.
5. To work in partnership with parents and carers, outside agencies and ACT staff to co-ordinate interventions as appropriate.
6. To support form tutors with their pastoral responsibilities i.e. ensuring pastoral information for individual pupils is in place (pupil profiles, behaviour plans etc.) and updated as appropriate and that staff are aware of any changes.
7. To be flexible in working hours as student needs require.
8. To represent the views of ACT at multi-agency meetings i.e. Child in Need, Child Protection, Core group, Strategy, Early intervention & Best Interest etc.
9. To be available to provide pastoral support for staff and pupils, whenever the need arises.

Key Responsibilities:

1. Individual Counselling and Support:

- Provide one-on-one counselling sessions to students who need emotional support, helping them navigate issues such as anxiety, stress, peer relationships, family problems, self-esteem, and academic pressures.
- Use a range of therapeutic approaches tailored to the individual needs of each student (e.g., CBT, play therapy, solution-focused brief therapy).
- Monitor the emotional well-being and mental health of students, identifying those at risk or in need of additional support.

2. Group Counselling:

- Develop and facilitate group sessions for students on common issues such as friendships, bullying, stress management, and emotional regulation.
- Promote positive peer interactions and conflict resolution strategies through group work.

3. Safeguarding:

- Ensure that all work with students adheres to the school's safeguarding policies and statutory requirements.

- Report any concerns or disclosures in line with school safeguarding protocols and work with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) on appropriate interventions.

4. Collaboration with Staff and Parents/Carers:

- Work with staff to assess and identify students who may benefit from counselling services.
- Provide advice and guidance to staff on how to support the emotional needs of students in the classroom.
- Communicate with parents/carers, offering guidance on issues affecting their child's emotional well-being and facilitating referrals to external services where appropriate.

5. Programme Development and Workshops:

- Develop and deliver well-being programmes and workshops for students to promote emotional literacy, resilience, and coping strategies.
- Organise workshops for staff and parents and carers on child mental health, well-being, and emotional support strategies.

6. Record Keeping and Reporting:

- Maintain accurate, confidential records of counselling sessions and interactions with students, adhering to GDPR and confidentiality standards.
- Provide regular reports to the senior leadership team on trends, issues, and the overall well-being of students within the school (whilst respecting confidentiality).

7. Professional Development:

- Stay up-to-date with the latest developments in child mental health, counselling techniques, and educational psychology.
- Attend relevant training and continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities to enhance skills and maintain registration with relevant professional bodies.
- Attend regular supervision to maintain ethical and professional standards.

8. External Referrals:

- Liaise with external agencies and attend meetings such as CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services), social services, Early Help and educational psychologists for additional support when necessary.
- Coordinate referrals to external services for students requiring more specialised or intensive intervention.

Qualifications and Experience:

Essential:

- Qualified Counsellor or Psychotherapist: Recognised qualification in counselling or psychotherapy (Level 4 diploma or higher).
- BACP/UKCP Registration: Full membership or accreditation with the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP), UK Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP), or an equivalent body.
- Experience with Children: Proven experience working with children in a school or educational setting, ideally with children aged 9–12 (Key Stage 2/3).
- Knowledge of Child Development: Strong understanding of child development, mental health issues, and the emotional needs of children in a school environment.

- Safeguarding: Familiarity with safeguarding policies and practices in educational settings, with up-to-date safeguarding training.

- DBS Check: Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check required.

Desirable:

- Experience in Schools: Prior experience working in a primary or secondary school as a school counsellor or in a similar pastoral role.

- Specialised Training: A recognised qualification in Children's Counselling. Additional training in specific therapeutic approaches such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), Solution-Focused Therapy, Play Therapy, or Art Therapy.

- Experience with Special Educational Needs (SEN): Experience supporting children with SEN, including autism spectrum conditions, ADHD, and other neurodevelopmental disorders.

- Crisis Management: Experience in dealing with crisis situations, such as self-harm, suicide ideation, bullying, or bereavement.

Skills and Attributes:

- Empathy and Patience: Ability to engage with children compassionately and patiently, understanding their emotional and developmental needs.

- Communication Skills: Strong communication skills to engage effectively with pupils, staff, and parents.

- Organisational Skills: Ability to manage a caseload of pupils, maintaining confidentiality and ensuring timely interventions.

- Team Player: Collaborative approach to working with school staff, families, and external agencies.

- Resilience: Ability to handle emotionally challenging situations with professionalism and care.

KEY TASKS – Pupil Specific

1. To offer the young people the opportunity for counselling support as required.
2. To support the class teams in withdrawing individuals (as and when required).
3. To co-ordinate support from appropriate external agencies i.e. MIND, Educational psychologists, Healthy young minds, Learning Disabilities team, Positive Steps, Children's & adult MASH teams etc.

4. To take a lead on Relational Inclusion (including a trauma informed attachment aware approach)
5. To provide or coordinate initial support with students facing difficulties relating to Mental Health
6. To liaise and work with families (involvement with EHCPs, Annual Reviews and single conversations)
7. To deliver talks/presentations etc. to groups within the community when and where required
8. To work in partnership with outside safeguarding professionals i.e. 'Missing from home', 'Healthcare', 'Prevent', 'Child Exploitation teams' & Adult services

KEY TASKS – Family Specific

9. To work in partnership with form tutors to act as a point of contact between home/school and other professionals internally and externally, mediating between students/teachers.
10. To work in partnership with form tutors to build relationships with family and external agencies offering advice and guidance on any concerns raised, attending relevant meetings: Early Help referrals (referral and meeting with parents- follow up meetings)

Standard Duties

1. To work across the ACT as required.
2. To understand the importance of inclusion, equality and diversity, both when working with students and with colleagues, and to promote equal opportunities for all.
3. To uphold and promote the values and the ethos of ACT.
4. To implement and uphold the policies, procedures and codes of practice of ACT, including relating to customer care, finance, data protection, ICT, health & safety, anti-bullying and safeguarding/child protection.
5. To take a pro-active approach to health and safety, working with others in ACT to minimise and mitigate potential hazards and risks, and actively contribute to the security of the ACT, e.g. challenging a stranger on the premises.
6. To participate and engage with workplace learning and development opportunities, subject to the ACT's training plan, working to continually improve own performance and that of the team/Group.
7. To attend and participate in relevant meetings as appropriate.
8. To undertake any other additional duties commensurate with the grade of the post.

Contacts

Students, colleagues within the ACT, staff of the local authority, other education and healthcare professionals, parents, carers and guardians and visitors

Special Conditions:

An enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check is required for this post

It is essential that potential candidates have a car, full and valid driving licence and business insurance on their vehicle as part of their duties may be to visit children in their homes for safeguarding purposes. In addition, there may be a need to drive one of the ACT vehicles should the need arise, be willing and able to travel between sites during the working day as may be required.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

	Selection Criteria Essential	Selection Criteria Desirable	How Assessed
Education & Qualifications	<p>Qualified Counsellor or Psychotherapist: Recognised qualification in counselling or psychotherapy (Level 4 diploma or higher).</p> <p>GCSE English Language and Maths grade 'C' or equivalent</p>		<p>AF / I</p> <p>AF / I</p>
Experience	<p>Experience of working with children and young people to support them in overcoming barriers to their personal, social or learning development</p>	<p>Experience of working with children and young people in an educational setting</p>	<p>AF / I</p>



	<p>Experience of making assessments of children and young people to identify their individual needs</p> <p>Experience of working in a team collaboratively to share ideas and achieve objectives</p> <p>Experience of undertaking clerical and administrative tasks</p>		<p>AF / I</p> <p>AF / I</p>
Skills & Abilities	<p>Communication skills to influence, persuade, motivate and engage with a wide range of children, young people and their families</p> <p>Interpersonal skills to form and maintain positive working relationships with students, their families, colleagues, and other education/healthcare professionals and partner organisations</p> <p>Listening skills to support children, young people and their families through understanding their point of view in a non-judgemental approach</p> <p>Creative skills to develop a range of different options and alternatives that will support children and young people to engage in the learning process</p> <p>Analytical skills to interpret information, determine different options for action and feasibility of proposals to solve difficult problems</p>		<p>AF / I</p> <p>AF / I</p> <p>AF / I</p> <p>AF / I</p> <p>AF / I</p>



	<p>Initiative to plan own individual counselling work, and make decisions to deliver the service in the most appropriate way to achieve the best outcomes for students</p> <p>Organisational skills to manage time effectively, meet potentially conflicting deadlines and work without close supervision</p>		<p>AF / I</p> <p>AF / I</p>
Knowledge	<p>Knowledge and understanding of trauma informed attachment aware practice.</p> <p>Knowledge and understanding of data protection and confidentiality issues</p> <p>Detailed knowledge of relevant legislation and government initiatives and how that relates to the curriculum within the school</p> <p>Knowledge of safeguarding, including CAF processes, and child protection issues with knowledge of appropriate action to take if a disclosure is made</p>	<p>Knowledge and understanding of the range of potential barriers to learning and attending school faced by children and young people</p> <p>Knowledge of how these barriers can be overcome or mitigated to reduce their impact on children and young people</p>	<p>AF / I</p> <p>AF / I</p> <p>AF / I</p> <p>AF / I</p>
Work circumstances	<p>To work occasionally out of school hours</p> <p>It is essential that potential candidates have a car, full and valid driving licence and business insurance on their vehicle as part of their duties may be to visit children in their homes for safeguarding purposes. In addition, there may be a need to drive one of the ACT vehicles should the</p>		<p>I</p> <p>I</p>



	need arise, be willing and able to travel between sites during the working day as may be required.		
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Abbreviations: AF = Application Form; I = Interview.

Any candidate with a disability who meets the essential criteria will be invited to interview